



## **PLANNING AHEAD 2010 HURRICANE SEASON QUICKLISTS**

### **BEFORE AND AFTER A STORM: Generator Safety**

These tips are abridged from Miami-Dade County's 2010 Emergency Management "Hurricanes" web pages.

The ideal time to check your generator is before the hurricane season begins on June 1.

Gasoline-powered generators can be useful after a storm knocks out power to your home. However, generators must be used properly to avoid deadly hazards such as carbon monoxide poisoning and fire potential. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas produced by gasoline combustion that can be lethal if it accumulates in confined areas.

Follow these tips to stay safe when using generators:

- Carefully inspect a generator after long storage periods for broken or missing parts. Wipe off all dust. Test for functionality with a small amount of fuel.
- Always operate a fixed or portable generator outside a home in a well-ventilated area. Set them up away from any windows, doors, vents and other openings.
- Never operate a portable generator on the balcony of a multi-unit building such as an apartment or condominium.
- Purchase a carbon monoxide detector and install it in your home.
- Never refuel a generator while it's running or still hot.
- Do not overload the generator.
- Never connect a portable generator to the main electrical panel in your home.
- Store a portable generator in a dry, ventilated area with its fuel tank empty.
  - Before storing, clean the generator by removing all oil and dirt.
  - Do not store the generator near fuel supplies.
  - Do not store the generator near appliances such as water heaters or pumps, especially if they're gas-powered.

